

St Mary the Virgin  
EWELL PARISH CHURCH  
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## WEEKLY NOTES

6 January 2008

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### THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD.

The festival of the Epiphany proclaims, 'Here is Christ.' This 'showing forth', which is what the word means, is illustrated from the scriptures in several ways during this period, though because of the quirks of this year's calendar (due to an exceptionally early Easter) only two features are really singled out in 2008. One is marked this week, the other – Christ's baptism – next week. In western Christendom the season begins with a concentration on the visit of the Wise Men to the infant Christ. In that richly devotional tale we see the Magi on a journey, but then we recall that, by grace, so are we. For the Magi the star was the kingly sign, and they duly pressed forward, following its guiding light. We are at an advantage over the Wise Men, for although we journey through life seeking the King of kings – and knowing all the time that the final vision is not in this life – we do not have to follow a mere sign. We have the reality itself, a living Lord Jesus, who has blazed the trail ahead of us, and bids us follow in his footsteps. On the first Sunday of the calendar year we are bidden to 'look unto Jesus', who is constantly standing before us in an eternal Epiphany, and who is ready to show us the way to life, if only we would heed his call, keep our eyes on him, and seek him with our whole heart.

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Tomorrow I complete twenty-five years as Vicar of Ewell. Quite a long run in some respects, certainly much longer than is usual. Even Fr Paul Davis only managed 24. This will, of course, be my last year in post, and the process of preparing for an interregnum is slowly starting to move into action. There are interesting times ahead. W.R.H.

**Our prayers today.** We pray for this church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion we pray today for two Provinces of the Church in Canada: 'Canada' (Quebec) and Ontario. In the Diocese we pray today for the Diocesan representatives on the General Synod. In our parish prayer we pray for the students from NESCOL who work in our churchyards, and in our systematic prayer for the people of the parish we pray for those living in Staneway.

*Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known, and join us for coffee in the Church Hall across the road after the Sung Eucharist.*

### SUNDAY SERVICES

- 0800 HOLY COMMUNION** *Common Worship rite*  
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 383.  
Eucharistic Prayer B: page 188. Other Epiphany material: page 304
- 0930 PROCESSION AND SUNG EUCHARIST** *Common Worship rite*

Children's Hour in the Church Hall; Crèche available, if required.  
Order 1 (black book): page **167**. Collect of the Day: page **383**.  
Eucharistic Prayer **B**: page **188**.  
Other Epiphany material: page **304**.  
Setting of the Eucharist: *Howells* in E flat.

*Note:* This year we are not having the Procession of the Three Kings at the Epiphany Eucharist (see below). It will be the normal service today.

Processional hymn: 56

Gloria in excelsis: Gloria from *Richard Jenkinson's* 'Mass for Midnight',

with congregational refrain: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*.

*English version:* Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Invocation and Greeting.

The Collect of the Day: page 383. *Readings on separate paper.*

New Testament Reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.

Gradual hymn: 52

The Holy Gospel reading from St. Matthew

Sermon by *the Vicar*

Nicene Creed (sung today): traditional text on page 213.

Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.

Offertory hymn: 50 [Tune: 338]; Collection.

Eucharistic Prayer B: page 188; Preface of the Epiphany: page 304.

At the end of the prayer, turn back to page 178 for the Lord's Prayer, etc.

After the Invitation to Communion: Hymn 57

During the Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).

Anthem: O little One sweet, O little One mild. *J S Bach*

[Words of Hymn 31, verses 1 and 2.]

After the anthem all stand for the Post-Communion Prayer:

The Blessing and Dismissal

Hymn 49 [First tune]

Organ Voluntary

## **1100 MATTINS AND HOLY BAPTISM**

*There is a special leaflet for this service.*

## **1800 Evening Prayer** in the Parish Room.

### **In church this week.**

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion.**

### **Other events and notices.**

Wednesday 1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the Church Hall a time for fine blend and good companionship. 'Have a break; have a coffee.'

**My thanks** to all who helped in connexion with the Christmas services at St Mary's. It may all be twelve days away now, but the somewhat basic Notes for the Sunday immediately after Christmas are normally produced well before Christmas, so this is the first opportunity of saying thank-you for all the hard work which has gone into the production of our Christmas services. Jonathan Holmes produced some really great music from the choir over the festive season, and Jeremy Coles' accomplished accompaniment of the services was rounded off with a bravura performance of the Widor Toccata on Christmas morning, which was loudly applauded. Indeed, the Christmas services seemed to me to have a decidedly new vigour and vitality about them this time. I am also grateful to those who took on board such items as folding the service-papers. Such jobs are not exactly thrilling, but they are essential if the services are to run smoothly and efficiently. It was good to see the church looking so festive, bright and happy over Christmas; curiously enough, it seemed slightly less outrageous than usual. However, I was somewhat disappointed to find that considerably fewer than usual stayed on in church on Advent 4 in order to help with the general decoration, and I hope that this is not a pointer to the future. At the risk of saying the obvious, the church does not decorate itself for Christmas. Although they play a major part in all this (like dealing with the Christmas tree and decorating the chancel), it is not actually part of the choristers' job to do nearly all this work; and this time there were, quite frankly, not all that many others involved. The alternative, of course, is not to do anything at all, and do we really wish to follow that option? W.R.H.

The **Gloria in excelsis**, written some years ago by our former Director of Music, Richard Jenkinson, and used with the rest of the '*Mass for Midnight*' once again this year at the Midnight Mass, is based on very familiar Christmas carol melodies. It is not really suitable for use at other seasons of the year, so it seems a good idea to use it again this Sunday at the Sung Eucharist, on the feast of the Epiphany, while it is still in the 'choral mind,' and the Church is still in the Christmas season. It has an easy and familiar congregational refrain.

**Mr Reg Saunders** has had a spell in hospital, and has been advised by his doctors not to do anything in church for the next six months. We wish him well, and hope that he will soon be in better health, and in due course once more in harness in his capacity as Reader. **Group Captain Freddie Melrose** has had a nasty fall, and is also out of action for Lesson-reading at Mattins for a while. There are quite a lot of sick and housebound people at present. 'The Headmaster and the Group Captain' are both mentioned now, because they are both rather obviously 'front of house' on Sundays, and people may be wondering why they are not about.

**The singers** on Christmas morning at the Sung Eucharist were, for various reasons, in the unusual position of being in front of the chancel screen, but behind the nave altar. It was a bit cramped for all concerned, not least because the presence of the Crib meant that there was even less room than usual. However, there was no denying that the quality of the sound was vastly improved, and this fact was commented upon by several people. At the Arrival at Bethlehem Service on the afternoon of Christmas Eve the choristers had been placed at the east end of the south aisle (for musical reasons), but this was certainly *not* a success, and is unlikely to happen again. On other occasions the choir has been sited near where the Christmas Tree is as present, and that also seems to have worked, though co-ordination with the organ is none too easy when this position is used. Experiments like this are always useful, and we may well try re-siting the choir at the screen on an occasional basis at the Sunday Eucharist, when the nave altar is in use, or else in the west gallery, which was also used over Christmas for the carol-singing before Midnight Mass. In a traditionally ordered church like ours, the chancel is often not always the best place for the singers, particularly when one has to take into account the position of an enormous organ, a late medieval chancel screen, and very uncomfortable and ill-designed stalls, all of which complicate things further in their own different ways.

**The Procession of the Three Kings**, which we usually have at the Eucharist on this particular Sunday is not happening this year. This is not for any particular reason, except possibly to draw attention to the fact that some optional (or even local) features of the liturgy are not so essential as to have to happen every time. However, it is an attractive and pleasant rite, with a few fairly obvious teaching points to make, and it can be done quite simply or 'in the grand manner.' Copies of the text for that feature of the service are 'in the cupboard', to be made use of as required in future years.

**Copies of the magazine El Dorado**, the magazine of the Diocese of Guyana, in which we have a twinned parish, are available for FREE in the Welcome Area. I have recently noticed that one of the clergy in Guyana is called Fr Campbell Ewell. W.R.H.

**Next Sunday.** Normal morning service arrangements, with Procession before the Sung Eucharist. It is the festival of the Baptism of Our Lord.

*Sharing the love of Christ, the Light of the world, with the people of Ewell.*